



Government of
Saskatchewan

International Year of Older Persons 1999

***The final report of the Provincial
Advisory Committee to the
Minister Responsible for Seniors***



December 1999

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

December 9, 1999

The Honourable Judy Junor
Minister Responsible for Seniors
Room 204, Legislative Building
Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 0B3

Dear Minister Junor:

As Chairperson for the Provincial Advisory Committee for International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) 1999, I am pleased to present to you our final report.

The year has been busy and challenging for our Committee which was tasked with the responsibility to lead IYOP 1999 celebrations in our province. In our collective opinion, IYOP 1999 in Saskatchewan was a definite success with many, many communities celebrating the year with an intergenerational theme. We have worked closely with the IYOP Secretariat in Ottawa and the Canada Coordinating Committee to enthusiastically promote and support the national IYOP workplan.

As for a legacy from IYOP 1999, we would ask that you consider the recommendations made by our Committee contained in the attached report.

On behalf of all the Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to lead IYOP 1999 in Saskatchewan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wes Ashwin', with a stylized circular flourish at the beginning.

Wes Ashwin, Chairperson
Provincial Advisory Committee for International Year of Older Persons 1999
Saskatchewan Representative to the Canada Coordinating Committee for
International Year of Older Persons 1999

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Chairperson's Report

As the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) 1999 draws to a close, it is time to reflect on a busy and eventful year marked by challenges, successes, and celebrations.

The tremendous efforts and leadership of the Provincial Advisory Committee members must be acknowledged. I want to personally thank them for their commitment, enthusiasm and collaboration. Since the Committee's first meeting on October 1, 1998, they have worked diligently to bring together the voices and energy of both seniors' organizations and seniors in general across Saskatchewan.

The benefits of their cooperative and collaborative work are evident in the partnerships that developed throughout the year. In large part due to the status of and respect for both our Committee members and the organizations they represent, we were able to elicit corporate support for our work from both the private and public sectors.

Not surprisingly, questions about the year frequently arise. For example:

- Has the IYOP purpose been achieved?
- Did IYOP succeed in dispelling myths about older persons?
- Will the public accept and implement the International Federation of Ageing Montreal Declaration entitled, "The Rights and Responsibilities of Older Persons" recently tabled with the United Nations?
- Will there be a legacy?

The Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments need to take a proactive role in maintaining the momentum of the year. Concerns brought to our attention during the year need to be addressed and we have included in our report some recommendations as to how that might be achieved.

The year held many highlights, with new relationships at the top of the list. The role of Flora MacDonald and Don Harron, as Co-Chairs of the Canada Coordinating Committee (CCC), was significant. Their contributions were outstanding and their dedication and commitment much appreciated.

The success of some of our IYOP projects overwhelmed us; others surprised us. In Saskatchewan, IYOP work was slow to start because of the delay in appointing Co-chairs for the CCC by Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors. Once that was done, we were soon well organized, with an ambitious workplan and quickly moved ahead of some of our provincial counterparts. Overall, we did the best we could and are proud of our efforts!

Respectfully submitted:



Wes Ashwin, Chairperson,
Provincial Advisory Committee to the Minister
Responsible for Seniors for International Year of Older
Persons 1999, and
Saskatchewan Representative to the Canada
Coordinating Committee for the International Year of
Older Persons 1999

Executive Summary

The Provincial Advisory Committee for International Year of Older Persons (IYOP), successfully promoted IYOP celebrations across the province. The Committee was appointed on October 1, 1998 by the Minister Responsible for Seniors.

With Wes Ashwin as our able representative to the Canada Coordinating Committee for IYOP and Chair of the Provincial Committee, Saskatchewan promoted and supported the work of the Canada Coordinating Committee for IYOP. In addition, we delivered on an ambitious workplan of our own. The support and leadership of our IYOP partners (federal and provincial governments, seniors' organizations and private sector) had a significant impact on IYOP in the province. Overall, the province's communities and seniors' organizations were eager to celebrate the year and acknowledge the contributions made by our older citizens.

According to the United Nations General Assembly, the purpose of the IYOP was to foster international awareness of the importance of the role of older persons and to stimulate intergenerational respect and support for seniors as the world's population rapidly ages.

At 14.4%, Saskatchewan has the highest per capita percentage of persons sixty-five years of age and over in all of Canada (Statistics Canada 1996).

As our committee members met with seniors and their organizations, numerous concerns and issues were brought to our attention. The common themes were:

- The perceived lack of input into government program and policy development by older persons and their organizations.
- What is perceived as a lack of interest on the part of governments at all levels in the significant demographic increase of older persons in our province.
- Problems within the health care system as it relates to older persons.
- Inadequate income for older persons, primarily single women and those below the low income cut-off line.
- Availability and affordability of housing which meets the particular needs of older persons.
- Lack of recognition of the voluntary contributions made by older persons in our province.
- Need for increased support for the concept of adult education/lifelong learning.

Recommendations to address these concerns are included in this report. We encourage all sectors and levels of government to work together to develop ways to effectively address the needs of an aging society and acknowledge the contributions of seniors. The theme for the year was Canada, a society for all ages, and we encourage support and leadership for the continuation of that theme.

Introduction

International Year of Older Persons 1999 (IYOP 1999) in Saskatchewan was determined to be a year of celebration. A twelve-member committee made up entirely of older persons, and chaired by Wes Ashwin, was appointed by the Minister Responsible for Seniors on October 1, 1998.

The tasks of the Committee were to promote and facilitate community-based participation for IYOP in the province and to keep the Minister advised of those activities. The Committee was also given responsibility for overseeing the implementation of Canada Coordinating Committee projects. Their final task was to provide the Minister with a final report on IYOP.

Background and Context of IYOP 1999

The United Nations General Assembly declared 1999 to be International Year of Older Persons. The reasons for this declaration were to foster international awareness of the important role seniors play in society and point out the need for intergenerational respect and support.

Demographic Trends

According to the United Nations, rapidly-changing demographics will mean that the number of persons 60 years of age and over, as a percentage of the world's total population, will increase significantly, growing from one in 14 persons in 1999 to one in four within the next few years.

In Canada, our senior population (age 65 and over) is among the fastest growing in the world. As we enter the 21st century, Canada's seniors represent 12% of our total population. Over the next 40 years, the seniors population is projected to reach 23%. Here in Saskatchewan, seniors comprise 15% of our total population, the highest of any place in Canada.

This overall aging of the population will have a notable impact on society, economically, socially and culturally.

Plans to dispel myths about aging, reduce the fear of aging and promote a realistic image of aging formed the foundation of Canada's participation in IYOP. The year was viewed as an opportunity for all Canadians to recognize and benefit from seniors' talents, energies, life experiences and contributions to society.

In Canada, the theme for the year was Canada, a society for all ages. Objectives for the year were developed in consultation with seniors and their organizations and endorsed by the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors in March 1998. Those objectives were to:

- enhance understanding, harmony and mutual support across the generations;
- increase recognition of seniors' contributions to their families, their communities and the country;
- help Canadians understand how individual and societal choices and decisions made today will affect individuals and our society in the future;

- encourage all sectors of society to be responsive to a diverse and aging population in a rapidly changing world; and
- create the potential for aging-related products, technology and services.

Canada Coordinating Committee

To support Canada's theme and objectives for the year, detailed in A Plan of Action for the IYOP in Canada, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors in Canada appointed a Canada Coordinating Committee (CCC) in March 1998.

Seventeen older persons of distinction from across Canada were appointed as volunteers to the CCC, with Don Harron and The Honourable Flora MacDonald named as Co-Chairs.

In June 1998, Wes Ashwin was selected by the Minister Responsible for Seniors, Honourable Lorne Calvert, to represent Saskatchewan on the Canada Coordinating Committee. The CCC was charged with the task of offering leadership, support and guidance to participating groups to ensure the objectives of IYOP were reflected in all events and activities and that activities involved as many Canadians as possible. The CCC had an active and successful year and has presented a final report to the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors.

Provincial Advisory Council

In October 1998, Wes Ashwin became Chairperson of Saskatchewan's Provincial Advisory Committee, made up of twelve older persons appointed by the province's Minister Responsible for Seniors. Those appointed were either persons of distinction or representatives of major seniors' organizations. In most cases, they were both.

In addition to Wes Ashwin of Saskatoon, appointees included:

- Alpha Lafond of Muskeg Lake Cree First Nations;
- Elmer Noble of Shaunavon;
- Sylvia Fedoruk of Saskatoon;
- Marjorie Willson of Moosomin;
- Frank Draper of Moose Jaw;
- Ed Simonar of Shell Lake;
- Ruth Weinhandl of Lintlaw;
- Emma Pratt of Regina;
- John Bryde of Regina;
- Rowena McLellan of Saskatoon; and
- Eric Bergeron of Saskatoon.

On October 1, 1998, Glenda Hanson was seconded from Saskatoon Social Services to assume the role of Provincial Coordinator for IYOP. The Provincial Coordinator position was established to provide leadership in coordinating the province's role in IYOP, and to support Wes Ashwin's work with the CCC and the work of the Provincial Advisory Committee. Responsibility for the expenses of the twelve-person committee and the Provincial Coordinator's salary was assumed by the provincial Department of Social Services.

Terms of Reference for the Provincial Advisory Committee are attached (see Appendix I)

Using as a guide, "A Plan of Action for the IYOP in Canada", the Provincial Advisory Committee and the Provincial Coordinator were responsible for:

- providing leadership to seniors, their organizations and communities by promoting IYOP, identifying opportunities for community-based projects to celebrate the year, and providing information on the goals and objectives of IYOP within their communities;
- coordinating and serving as liaison persons between seniors' organizations and the CCC on potential activities to celebrate IYOP;
- informing the Minister Responsible for Seniors of events and celebrations being planned by organizations and communities to celebrate IYOP; and
- working with the corporate community to raise awareness of IYOP and linking seniors organizations with potential corporate sponsors for their events and projects.

Work Plan for IYOP 1999 Provincial Advisory Committee

Referencing A Plan of Action for the IYOP in Canada, and the tasks outlined for the Provincial Advisory Committee and Coordinator, an ambitious workplan covering the period from October 1, 1998 to January 31, 2001, was completed in December 1998. See Appendix 2. The workplan was approved by the Honourable Harry Van Mulligen, Minister Responsible for Seniors, in January 1999.

In the opinion of the Provincial Advisory Committee and the Provincial Coordinator, IYOP in Saskatchewan was a success. The Canada Coordinating Committee IYOP projects were promoted and supported within the province with per capita participation above the national average for several projects. All of the Advisory Committee's goals were met or exceeded. At least 100 Saskatchewan communities held IYOP events.

IYOP Workplan Projects and Highlights

January and February 1999

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, along with a member of the Provincial Advisory Committee and the Provincial Coordinator, led a 20-community tour to provide information and encourage communities to plan IYOP events.

February 1999

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) held a workshop for the Provincial Advisory Committee on Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement, and the Canada Pension Plan. The workshop highlighted the Guaranteed Income Supplement's simplified application process. HRDC asked for our assistance in advising the public of the changes and encouraging older persons who may be eligible to apply.

March 1999

Fifty-one communities received up to \$500 each from the Provincial Advisory Committee to assist them in their IYOP event planning. The grants were made possible because of \$25,000 in project funding provided by Health Canada. Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism was our partner and we have compiled a record book and photos of these IYOP events.

April 1999

The Honourable Harry Van Mulligen introduced the Provincial Advisory Committee to the Legislative Assembly where leaders of all parties publicly thanked the Committee for their work.

May 1999

The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism hosted an IYOP conference, the theme of which was "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly". Wes Ashwin and Don Harron made presentations at the conference which was held on May 18, 19 and 20.

On May 21, **Building a Lasting Legacy**, a tree-planting program, was launched at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. The program was the result of a partnership with TREEmendous Saskatchewan, and the participation of twelve Saskatchewan communities.

On May 26, "Honouring Our Elders", a traditional First Nations Pow Wow was held at Wanuskewin Heritage Park on May 26, with Don Harron as our guest. Mr. Harron made the observation that this was the best IYOP event he had attended anywhere!

July 1999

Our three English version IYOP public service announcements were released. Partners for this project were CBC Television, Health Canada, and Human Resources Development Canada. French and closed caption versions were released in September.

August 1999

Walk the World, sponsored by Bata Shoes, and the World Health Organization's **Global Embrace** were launched provincially at Saskatoon's Midtown Mall, with emphasis on promotion of fitness and active living for healthy aging. Our partners for these events were the Saskatoon Council on Aging and the Saskatchewan Seniors' Fitness Association.

September 1999

Wes Ashwin opened **The Challenges of An Aging Society** conference where eight experts in the field of aging gave their perspectives on the challenges of our aging population in Saskatchewan and in Canada. The conference was hosted by Statistics Canada.

October 1999

On October 1, the International Day of Older Persons, a tree planting ceremony was held on the grounds of the Legislative Building in Regina to honour the IYOP leadership of Co-Chairs, Flora MacDonald and Don Harron and our provincial Chairperson, Wes Ashwin. TREE Canada was our partner.

On October 2, hundreds of people from communities across the province took part in the World Health Organization's **Global Embrace**. In Saskatoon, Regina and Moosomin, Provincial Advisory Committee Members and the Saskatchewan Seniors' Fitness Association hosted events.

October 17 saw the Inner City Churches of Saskatoon host an IYOP ecumenical service at Knox United Church. Wes Ashwin gave the sermon and The Honourable Flora MacDonald was the guest speaker.

November 1999

Spotlight on Seniors, a very successful education and trade show, was held in Saskatoon on November 1. It was hosted by the Saskatoon Council on Aging with support from the Provincial Advisory Committee and Coordinator.

From November 1st to 4th, Wes Ashwin, in partnership with the United Church, coordinated an IYOP pre-retirement event at the Prairie Christian Training Centre, Fort Qu'Appelle.

November 15th, the IYOP Provincial Awards Dinner was held at Government House in Regina with The Honourable Flora MacDonald as guest speaker. Ninety persons attended the dinner which saw seven

older person Honourees from around the province publicly recognized for their outstanding volunteer efforts in their retirement. See Appendix 3. The Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina was our partner for this significant event. Corporate Sponsor was Health Canada, Regional Office.

December 1999

The thirteenth and final meeting of the Provincial Advisory Committee took place. It was during this meeting that our final report was presented to the Honourable Judy Junor, Minister Responsible for Seniors. A highlight of the thirteen meetings was the relationships that developed among these individuals and the organizations they represent.

October 1998 - December 1999

Wes Ashwin, along with Provincial Advisory Committee Members and the Provincial Coordinator, made hundreds of presentations throughout the province. While the majority of these speaking requests came from seniors' organizations, many were received from schools, health districts and other organizations as well.

The Provincial Coordinator's office responded to more than thirteen hundred requests for information over this 15-month period.

Communications Strategy for IYOP 1999

October 1998

International Year of Older Persons officially began in the province on October 1, 1998. Saskatchewan issued a news release on this date as part of the Federal, Provincial, Territorial launch of IYOP. The news release also announced the appointment of a Provincial Advisory Committee to the Minister Responsible for Seniors for IYOP 1999.

The IYOP Secretariat in Ottawa provided excellent communication tools including the IYOP Community Kit (an event planning kit and IYOP logo poster), a Corporate Kit (for businesses), an Information Kit (fact sheets and IYOP logo poster), and the "Canada's Seniors At A Glance" poster.

In October 1998, the IYOP Secretariat mailed 1,200 Community Kits to provincial organizations (seniors, children and families, multicultural, etc.). An additional 3,000 Community Kits were distributed by the Provincial Coordinator and Advisory Committee members as part of their public presentations and in response to requests to the Provincial Coordinator's office.

December 1998

A Communications Strategy for International Year of Older Persons was developed. The key messages were:

- Saskatchewan is pleased to join with the rest of the country, and the world, in recognizing and paying tribute to the important role seniors play in our society.
- The national theme for our celebration of the 1999 International Year of Older Persons, is Canada, a society for all ages.
- Seniors make significant contributions to their families and to their communities.

Positive IYOP media coverage throughout the year included radio and television interviews, public service announcements, and publications (daily and weekly papers plus seniors' publications). Press was also invited to all provincial project launches and in most cases provided some coverage.

December 1998 - January 1999

A letter was sent to the Lieutenant Governor, each Mayor, First Nations Chief, and Métis Director in the province, telling them about IYOP 1999 and inviting them to take a leadership role in promoting and supporting IYOP events in their communities.

January 1999

Corporate Kits were sent to each Chamber of Commerce and District Health Board in the province. Individual Corporate Kits were used to solicit corporate funds for event planning by individuals and groups. The Information Kits were used as a handout during presentations.

February 1999

All Members of the Legislative Assembly received IYOP material in their constituency offices. All Social Services Regional Directors and Executive Directors received a Community Kit and other IYOP material. A summary of Canada Coordinating Committee and Provincial IYOP projects was prepared by the Provincial Coordinator and used as an information tool in presentations and in mailouts. See Appendix 4.

May 1999

A provincial pamphlet was designed and printed by the Communications and Public Education Branch of Saskatchewan Social Services. Due to the provincial election campaign, and the subsequent change in the Minister Responsible for Seniors, mass distribution of these pamphlets was delayed. They were, however, distributed by the Provincial Advisory Committee and Provincial Coordinator during presentations and events and in response to specific requests.

Role of Seniors' Organizations in publicizing IYOP

Among the members of the Provincial Advisory Committee were a number of representatives from major seniors' organizations including the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism; the Saskatoon Council on Aging; the Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc.; the Royal Canadian Legion; The Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina; the Federation des Aînés Fransaskois (French Seniors' provincial organization); and the Regina Seniors' Citizens Centre.

Supported by their representatives on the Provincial Advisory Committee, these organizations assumed a leadership role in promoting IYOP in their communications, publications and events.

As an unexpected bonus, it appeared that the monthly meetings of the Provincial Advisory Committee and the IYOP work which began in October 1998 enhanced communications and relationships between committee members and the organizations they represented, and with government.

Role of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee for Seniors

This Committee, which is chaired by Saskatchewan Social Services and includes representatives from major departments and crown corporations which provide services to seniors, also made International Year of Older Persons a priority in their communications, supporting the formal Communications Strategy and referencing its key messages.

Regularly-scheduled meetings between the Provincial Coordinator and the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee took place beginning in September 1998. For their IYOP project, the Interdepartmental Committee published a Programs and Services of Interest to Seniors booklet. In December 1999, Saskatchewan Health distributed 10,000 copies of the booklet.

In spite of a concerted effort on the part of everyone involved with IYOP, even as late as December 1999, it was common to hear people say, "IYOP, how come I've never heard of it before?"

Concluding Comments of the Provincial Advisory Committee

Wes Ashwin, Chairperson:

The Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments need to take a proactive role in maintaining the momentum of the year. It is hoped that all Ministers Responsible for Seniors, in all jurisdictions, will carry forward the concerns and emphasis of IYOP. The workload has been heavy. Even Co-Chair, Flora MacDonald, conceded that the Year has been a great deal more work than any of us expected! But that work needs to continue.

Ed Simonar, Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. (SSAI):

I found the Advisory Committee very interesting and educational and met some very nice people through it. I feel that we were not informed of this Year of Older Persons far enough in advance and that we were way behind with our information ... there wasn't time to do justice with some of the programs that were to be administered ... There was and still is the problem of communication between the public and the powers that be as many people still don't know what IYOP is or have not even heard of it.

Ruth Weinhandl, Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. (SSAI):

As a member of the Provincial Advisory Committee, I believe that the International Year of the Older Person has increased awareness of seniors in Saskatchewan. The Year has also encouraged intergenerational activities which enhance life for all involved. On the flip side, I would have preferred to see the money spent on more permanent assistance to seniors rather than in only a celebratory way.

John Bryde, Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina and Regina Seniors Citizens Centre:

As IYOP enters its final phase, it prompts a time of reflection and evaluation of the year's programs and activities. It has been a most interesting and challenging year, a learning experience for us all as we gained insight into the significance and magnitude of this global event. I feel much has been achieved in dispelling many of the myths of aging and how the public perceives the role of seniors. When made aware of the many contributions of seniors to society hopefully we will be regarded as an asset as opposed to a liability. Each senior has a wealth of experience, wisdom, and talent to share. It has been written, "If you want to know the road ahead, enquire of those who have travelled it."

Thanks to the excellent leadership of Wes and Glenda who performed above and beyond the call of duty. I feel we have achieved much to be proud of. When all work together toward a common goal, success is assured. It has been written that there is nothing as powerful as an idea whose time has come. The time for IYOP had certainly arrived in 1999, the last year of the twentieth century. I feel privileged to be part of this historic event. A tribute to all members, it was a pleasure to work with you all.

Elmer Noble, Royal Canadian Legion, Saskatchewan Command:

The whole idea of IYOP was well received across our province and across our nation. However, the larger centres appeared to have made faster progress in the programs and participation in the various activities than did the more rural areas where items of local concern seemed more important in the early part of the year.

The great cooperation of all generations of people across our nation was never greater than it has been in this year of IYOP. I would like to see some way of carrying on some part of this great comradeship between all us from the very young to the very oldest and between all of our many nationalities.

Marjorie Willson, Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism:

Lots of ideas were generated for IYOP and will continue as a legacy. Active living for all ages needs to be promoted such as in the Walk the World and Global Embrace organized walks. Other programs that encourage intergenerational contact such as Senior Friendly Community, Walk a Child to School and GenerationsCanConnect will continue with the IYOP legacy and myth-slaying about aging. Seniors are not well off financially despite what the experts said at the Challenges of An Aging conference held September 30, 1999 by Statistics Canada. Government needs to give Seniors increased access and input to program development and service delivery.

The IYOP year and the Provincial Advisory Committee have provided me with the opportunity to meet and talk with many seniors across the province. This has been a rewarding experience and I appreciated the opportunity.

The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism took us to 20 groups throughout the province. Most of these locations were in rural Saskatchewan where several towns congregated at one centre with an average attendance of 40 persons. I was accompanied by the Coordinator of the Provincial Advisory Committee at 13 of these sessions. The Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism attended 18, along with three members of the Advisory Committee who attended meetings in their districts.

Emma Pratt, Ochapawace First Nations Elder for Regina:

As a First Nations Elder, IYOP was an opportunity to emphasize what Elders can offer youth and what youth can offer Elders in return. In First Nations communities, Elders have a unique role in providing wisdom and teachings to younger generations and they also are a confidential listener to troubled youth who cannot talk with their parents. I hope the legacy for IYOP will be a greater understanding of and support by Elders for youth and re-establishment of community use of Elders in the larger centres. Youth and Elders should work together. Working with IYOP has been lots of fun and has made me realize that my poor health is still much better than some persons younger than me!

Frank Draper, Saskatchewan Seniors' Mechanism:

The Mayor of Moose Jaw declared 1999 International Year of Older Persons in our community and authorized the appointment of an IYOP committee. The committee met every month and organized a monthly event with lots of community participation from all ages. Seniors represent 18% of the population in our community and both politicians and community need to appreciate our contributions and our needs. There is much concern for low income seniors whose only income is from Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Saskatchewan Income Plan. Such income is inadequate to meet the needs of many seniors. For such persons, low income housing is also inadequate. IYOP has raised the public's awareness of the needs and rights of seniors in our community.

Rowena McLellan, Saskatoon Council on Aging:

The contributions and imaginative projects from small and rural communities were impressive. In many cases, there was intergenerational involvement that carried out the theme—Canada, a society for all ages. The need for affordable and appropriate housing has been brought to my attention frequently. The need, I am aware of, is primarily in urban centres.

The opportunity to meet and work with representatives of various organizations has been an eye opener and a joy. Whether it be seniors' centres or Councils on Aging, the meeting together has proved useful. It is possible to cooperate on projects and learn from each other. The opportunity for cooperation should include municipalities, the province, and federal agencies. The federal involvement is significant, but too often is unknown or seems uncoordinated with others.

Sylvia Fedoruk, former Lieutenant Governor:

I believe that the province and our senior citizens in particular have been well served by the activities of the Saskatchewan Advisory Committee. Despite a late start, through no fault of the Committee, the Committee did draw considerable attention to many issues that are of concern to our senior citizens ... I was most impressed by Wes's leadership and Glenda's total dedication to the program. I was also overwhelmed by the enthusiasm shown by most of the members of the Committee. It really was a good team.

I believe that Saskatchewan seniors would be well served if the Government appointed a permanent Seniors' advisory committee to the Minister Responsible for Seniors. A committee that would continue to alert the Minister on important issues affecting seniors.

Eric Bergeron, Federation des Aînés Fransaskois (FAF):

Our organization appreciated the opportunity to have representation on the Provincial Advisory Committee. I actively participated on the Committee and in IYOP events. FAF benefitted from the programs and material provided by IYOP. Major IYOP events occurred within our Fransaskois communities which involved all generations such as our Corn Roast at Debden, our AGM for FAF at Watrous, our Fete at Vonda and our comedic theatre in Prince Albert, Gravelbourg and Saskatoon.

A frequent concern raised with me by seniors has to do with home care providers. Seniors do not appreciate the numbers of caregivers coming into their home to provide either personal or home care and would rather have an opportunity to build a relationship with one caregiver.

Alpha Lafond, Elder Muskeg Lake Cree First Nations:

Because of poor health and inability to travel beyond Saskatoon, I was able to participate little on the Committee and have no comments for the Minister. (Alpha was very instrumental in our partnership and organization of the Pow Wow Honouring Our Elders at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. As an Elder, she opened the reception with a prayer and led the Committee in the Grand Entrance at the beginning of the Pow Wow. We were graced by her presence.)

Recommendations to the Minister

During our work as a Provincial Advisory Committee, many concerns about government services for seniors were brought to our attention. In keeping with the spirit of IYOP 1999, as members of the Advisory Committee, we wish to leave a legacy of our own work. Therefore, in an attempt to address the concerns raised during International Year of Older Persons, we respectfully make the following recommendations.

Recommendation #1

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **establish an Advisory Committee of Older Persons** to provide input on program and policy development and feedback on the health needs (physical, mental, spiritual) and status of older persons. Members would be appointed to the Committee by the Minister Responsible for Seniors and would include representatives from major seniors' organizations, indigenous groups, and persons who are familiar with and share the concerns of seniors. This committee would also assist in educating the public about the benefits of healthy aging.

It is further recommended that **a direct link be established between the Committee and Human Resources Development Canada and Health Canada**. Both HRDC and Health Canada played an important role in the success of IYOP in Saskatchewan and we believe it is crucial that this relationship be continued. We envisage a productive collaboration on seniors' issues and the inclusion of HRDC and Health Canada will create an essential federal-provincial link for communication and action.

It is further recommended that **an employee from Saskatchewan Health be assigned** to this committee to support the work of the Committee.

Recommendation #2

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **take the lead in working with all levels of government** to establish both a provincial and a national workplan to address the needs of our aging society. There appears to be an overall lack of interest in demographics related to seniors, not only within government, but within communities, seniors' groups and businesses as well. We are on the verge of a significant change in the population profile of our country. A rapidly aging population in a rapidly changing world will put unprecedented stresses on all sectors of the nation. We ignore these changes at our peril.

Recommendation #3

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **initiate an aggressive campaign of health promotion** rather than simply disease management.

It is further recommended that services be based on a continuum of care that provides the best model for responding to the health needs of a growing population of seniors. According to the National Advisory Council on Aging publication, "1999 and Beyond", such a continuum would include disease prevention, health promotion and the full range of home care/home support and institutional services for restoration, as well as chronic and palliative care.

Recommendation #4

Over-medication is both costly and detrimental to the health of the affected individual. Committee members heard numerous anecdotal stories of seniors being prescribed more medication than was necessary and more than they could afford. Invariably, when these situations were brought to the attention of an advocate who consulted with the physician and/or pharmacist on the senior's behalf, changes were made that benefited both the health and finances of the senior involved.

It is therefore recommended that the Minister Responsible for Seniors and the provincial government make it a priority to **develop a strategy to review the issue of over-medication**, not just of seniors, but of people of all ages.

It is suggested that an information and communication system be developed, perhaps as part of the health promotion strategy recommended above, to support the continuum of care services, and monitor the utilization and outcomes of medication.

Recommendation #5

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **take the lead in calling for a review of the income levels of older persons, particularly women**, in Saskatchewan and in Canada.

According to Statistics Canada, the average income for persons 65 years of age and older increased by 16% between 1981 and 1994. While the number of seniors with low incomes fell from 34% in 1980 to 19% in 1994, 53% of unattached women 65 and over lived in a low-income situation in 1994.

In a ranking of income by province, on a scale of 1 - 10, Saskatchewan men 65 years of age and older were ranked at #10 with the lowest incidence (5.6%) of low income in all of Canada. By comparison, Saskatchewan women were ranked at #6 with 19.6% living on incomes below the low income cut-off line.

These women are dependent upon government transfers of income, primarily pensions and income supplements because they did not work outside the home, they interrupted their careers to assume family responsibilities, or they worked at low-paying jobs with meagre or nonexistent pension plans.

We challenge governments at all levels to preserve government pension plans and income supplements which provide the only income for many current and future seniors.

Recommendation #6

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **undertake a review to determine the need for low-cost, affordable housing** designed to meet the needs of seniors, both now and in the future.

While Statistics Canada data indicate that 93% of Canada's seniors live in private homes, with 89% of these senior-headed homes having no outstanding mortgage, for low-income seniors who must rent accommodations, rising rents often mean they cannot afford appropriate or adequate housing.

Recommendation #7

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **take the lead in designing a strategic plan for the development of residential/institutional services** which meet the needs of an aging population. Such a plan would be based on the psychological, social, spiritual and physical needs of the residents.

While development of home care services has reduced the number of admissions in institutional care, the health problems of seven per cent who are admitted necessitate a more intensive level of care.

Recommendation #8

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **undertake a review of the province's home care services for older persons** to determine whether they adequately meet the needs of Saskatchewan seniors. Funding for home care services to assist seniors to remain comfortably and safely in their homes has not kept pace with the increased need which resulted from the closure of hospitals and hospital beds under the government's health reform initiatives.

It is further recommended that **consideration be given to extending publicly funded health care to include the assessed home care needs of seniors.**

It is further recommended that **the home care program become part of an integrated range of health services** accessible to rural and urban seniors.

It is further recommended that **there be some reasonable assurance of continuity with respect to the individual assigned to provide home care** so that seniors are not subject to the stress and insecurity of having multiple home care providers.

Recommendation #9

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **implement a program which would formally recognize the voluntary contributions of older persons in our province and utilize their experience and expertise** to assist government and communities.

Saskatchewan seniors are the largest volunteer group per capita in Canada. To encourage seniors to volunteer, governments must recognize the value of the commitment seniors have made and continue to make to their families and communities.

According to Statistics Canada, the economic value of volunteer work performed by seniors is \$2.3 billion annually. Without this contribution, the public and private sector would have to fill this gap or the standard of living within the community would deteriorate.

It is understood that the United Nations has designated 2001 to be International Year of the Volunteer. Given our experience with IYOP 1999, it is further recommended that the government ensure that those asked to provide leadership for the year are given adequate notice to plan for and implement a satisfactory and successful program and that there be appropriate representation of older persons on the committee.

Recommendation #10

That the Minister Responsible for Seniors **recognize the value of lifelong learning** and take steps to **encourage, develop, and support accessible lifelong learning centres** in both rural and urban areas throughout the province.

Education is as critical to the quality of life as adequate income or housing and participation in lifelong/adult education has a positive impact on health. Intergenerational education is beneficial, in a number of ways, to people of all ages.

Summary

Much work remains if we are to educate the public about older persons. We leave the examination, evaluation and implementation of this and the above recommendations to the Minister Responsible for Seniors and the yet-to-be-established Seniors Advisory Committee to the Minister.

Respectfully submitted by:

The Provincial Advisory Committee for International
Year of Older Persons
December 1999

Appendix I

**Provincial Advisory Committee to the Minister
Responsible for Seniors on International Year of Older
Persons (1999)**

Terms of Reference

The Advisory Committee to the Minister on International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) will include twelve members, as determined by the Minister Responsible for Seniors. The Committee will be established from October 1, 1998 to January 31, 2000, at which time a final report will be submitted to the Minister on the activities of the committee related to the Year.

The Committee will be chaired by Mr. Wes Ashwin, Saskatchewan's representative to the Canada Coordinating Committee, and will report to the Minister Responsible for Seniors.

The Committee will meet monthly, bi-monthly or as frequently as required as determined by workload and at the discretion of the Chair.

Using the Plan of Action for the IYOP in Canada (endorsed by F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors) as their guide, the Committee will:

1. Provide leadership to seniors, their organizations and communities by promoting the Year, identifying opportunities for community-based projects to celebrate the Year and providing information on the goals and objectives of IYOP within their communities;

2. Provide coordination and liaison between seniors' organizations and the Canada Coordinating Committee on potential activities to celebrate the Year.
3. Provide ongoing information to the Minister Responsible for Seniors on events and celebrations being planned by organizations and communities to celebrate IYOP; and
4. Work with the corporate community to raise awareness regarding IYOP and to link seniors organizations seeking funding for community-based projects with potential corporate sponsors. Travel, meeting and other expenses of the committee will be paid by Social Services (in accordance with approved provincial government rates). Ms. Glenda Hanson, the Provincial IYOP Coordinator, will provide staff support to the committee.

September 25, 1998

Appendix 2

Workplan for Provincial Advisory Committee

With respect to the Plan of Action for the IYOP in Canada and the Terms of Reference for the Provincial Advisory Committee, the following Workplan has been determined and covers the time frame October 1, 1998 through to January 31, 2000:

1. That each Committee member work within their own community to provide leadership to seniors, their organizations and communities by promoting the IYOP year, identifying opportunities for community-based projects to celebrate the year and providing information on the goals and objectives of IYOP.
2. That the Committee accept the \$25,000 funds made available December 1998 by Health Canada Regional Office for support for community-based IYOP events. That a subcommittee be struck and a process be put in place to advertise the program, review the applications and release those funds by March 1999.
3. That the Committee promote an older persons of distinction provincial dinner. Criteria for nomination and selection would be distinction within their community post-retirement. Nomination/selection criteria would focus on skills, knowledge, and availability to community. An organization to lead this project is required. The Committee would pursue corporate support for this project.

4. That the Committee promote and support the Great Canadian IYOP walk/run Challenge and within this project pursue the task of keeping Canadians/Saskatchewanians informed about healthy aging. A Global Embrace led by the World Health Organization will be held 2 October 1999. The Saskatchewan Seniors' Fitness Association with the Committee's support will be asked to promote and lead these walks.
5. A Communications Strategy has been drafted by Joy Adams Bauer, Communications Consultant, Social Services and the key messages include:

Saskatchewan is pleased to join with the rest of the country, and the world, in recognizing and paying tribute to the important role seniors play in our society;

The national theme for our celebration of the 1999 International Year of Older Persons is Canada, a society for all ages; and

Seniors make significant contributions to their families and to their communities.

6. That the CCC Golden Gardens project be promoted in the province and intergenerational involvement encouraged. That the material be sent to the Saskatchewan Horticultural Societies and seniors organizations in the province.
7. That the Committee support and promote the CCC's Legacy Contest, an oral history project where seniors are interviewed by young generations about significant events in the last century. That the Committee establish an adjudicating panel to review the Saskatchewan applicants by August 1999.

8. That the Committee pursue and provide support to organizations who would provide an education and trade show on aging-related products by year end in at least two locations.
9. That the Committee establish a list of corporations to receive one of the 350 IYOP Corporate Kits provided by the IYOP Secretariat for the province. Also, that the Corporate Kits be used to solicit individual corporate support for provincial projects.
10. That the Committee work in partnership with Wanuskewin Heritage Park staff to plan for an IYOP theme Pow Wow, likely near the end of May 1999. That both CCC Co-Chairs Don Harron and Flora MacDonald be invited. The Committee will seek corporate sponsorship for this event which last year attracted 10,000 visitors over three days.
11. That the Committee promote to communities the development of a roster of seniors with skills who would be interested/available to assist others/groups on a voluntary, consultation only or fee-for-service basis. That a strategy for implementation/development and partnerships be developed.
12. That the Committee invite the Lieutenant Governor, Mayors, First Nations Chiefs, and Métis Directors to take leadership in their communities to promote and support IYOP as early as 1 January 1999. Letters and IYOP material will be sent to these leaders.

13. That the Committee participate in a workshop February 1999 offered by Human Resources Development Canada to apprise us of the pension changes and solicit our feedback on those changes.
14. That the Committee in partnership with TREEmendous Saskatchewan promote an IYOP tree planting program with an intergenerational theme for May 1999.
15. That the Committee prepare a final report on IYOP 1999 in Saskatchewan for the Minister Responsible for Seniors by January 2000.

December 1998

Appendix 3

(16 November 1999 Press Release)

IYOP Provincial Awards Dinner

The Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina and the Provincial Advisory Committee for International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) 1999 are pleased to announce the names of the seven older persons who were honoured 15 November at our IYOP Provincial Awards Dinner at Government House, Regina. Scores of nominations had been received. The tremendous voluntary contributions made by all persons nominated was most humbling. Each nominee had to be at least sixty years of age and be active in volunteer work in their community or the province in their retirement years.

The following individuals were honoured:

Therese LeClaire (Saskatoon) is a recent recipient of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal for her many volunteer contributions including the promotion of Canadian unity as a French Canadian, and her work to restore social justice and love of neighbour.

Dr. Freda Ahenakew (Muskeg Lake Cree First Nations) was named to the Order of Canada in 1999 in recognition of her efforts on behalf of her people, her culture, and the preservation of her beloved Cree language. In retirement, Freda continues to be an active member of a group of Cree language professionals and remains an active volunteer in her community.

Norman Roebuck (Yorkton) is known as Yorkton's Heritage Man and was active all his farming life in agricultural organizations, at all levels of government, the Exhibition Association, and the Western Development Museum. Retirement did not slow Norman down as he continues to make significant contributions to his community.

Wally Coates (Regina), as a volunteer advocate for Senior Power, continues his long history of working to improve the quality of life for seniors. He is active in several local seniors' groups and serves on provincial and federal committees working to promote services for persons with disabilities.

Jeanne Morgan (Prince Albert) is a retired teacher who is very active in many organizations including her Church, Beta Sigma Phi, Canadian Red Cross, Canadian Cancer Society, and the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan. Her nominator said of Jean that she is never too busy to share her expertise, understanding and help.

Clarissa Hilts (Moosomin) is a retired teacher and is very active in the local Seniors organization, the United Church, the Legion, a transportation program for seniors, Meals on Wheels, the Superannuated Teachers Association, Cancer Research and the local Hospital Auxiliary. Clarissa's efforts are much appreciated in her home town of Moosomin.

Susan Conly (Macklin) is said to astound those who observe her quiet efficiency as she engages in a multitude of community services from conducting church services, writing books, getting roads named, school sites commemorated, agricultural fairs organized and seniors' organizations operating smoothly. Those who know her say Susan has a great imagination and a real talent for initiating projects that benefit her community.

Don King, Director of the Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina, chaired the event. Greetings from the Province were delivered by the Honourable Judy Junor, Minister Responsible for Seniors. Recipients were honoured with the presence of The Honourable Flora MacDonald, Co-Chair of the Canada Coordinating Committee for IYOP 1999, and guest speaker for the evening. The ninety guests were delightfully entertained by the musical group the Whole Notes. Wes Ashwin, Chairperson of the Provincial Advisory Committee for IYOP 1999 and his Provincial Committee Members introduced the Honourees. Gifts and a certificate of appreciation were given to each Honouree. The event closed with the Honourees forming a receiving line to receive congratulations from the other guests.

The Co-Hosts of this event were proud to recognize the contributions of these seven outstanding older persons. They also acknowledge the tremendous contributions made by those others who were nominated and all older persons who contribute to our province in a voluntary capacity. Saskatchewan has the highest rate of senior volunteers in Canada. The economic value of volunteer work done by seniors nationally is estimated at \$764 million to \$2.3 billion annually.

Appendix 4

IYOP 1999 Projects Summary of Canada Coordinating Committee and Provincial Advisory Committee - December 1999

(first summary was written February 1999 with updates done throughout the year)

Canada Coordinating Committee Projects:

- International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) is nearing completion. Communities across Canada and around the world have celebrated the contributions that older persons make to their families, their friends and their communities.
- the Canada Coordinating Committee (CCC) was tasked by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors with the coordination of national activities for seniors during 1999. The underlying objective of all these activities has been to get Canadians, especially seniors, involved in the IYOP and to make it their own.
- you have been encouraged throughout the year to participate in the following projects and spread the word to motivate Canadians of all ages to participate:

The Golden Gardens Project: a wildlife gardening program. An invitation for seniors to put their green thumbs to work! Get together with youth groups to create gardening legacies. To register/obtain funding for your group's garden, contact the Canadian

Wildlife Federation at 1-800-563-9453. Funds remain and applications will be accepted until March 31, 2000!

The Legacy Collection Contests: Audio and video recordings plus a written essay were used to capture seniors memories and stories of significant events in their lives. These contests closed in June and July and winning essay selections appeared in the October Readers Digest publication. Full contest information is available on the IYOP web site: <http://iyop-aipa.ic.gc.ca> (Trisstan Carpenter, 14 yrs. from Broadview, SK. won the prize for best youth audio tape)

The Seniors' Travel Program: in collaboration with Air Canada, Via Rail and Greyhound Bus Lines, this program offered attractive travel discounts for seniors in 1999. The program was very successful with all coupons distributed by late August.

The Walk the World 1999: was a joint project with Bata Shoes whereby all ages were encouraged to walk and keep track of distances walked by registering with Bata Shoes or by calling 1-800-355-4955. Walkers were then part of the global movement designed to increase the awareness of the benefits of physical activity and healthy aging. The Global Embrace was a world wide walk October 2 sponsored by the World Health Organization. Many communities in Saskatchewan, across Canada and around the world participated in this walk to embrace the globe.

Canadian Seniors Help Seniors in Kosovo: in collaboration with CARE Canada, a campaign was established to raise support for the more than 100,000 refugees forced to flee from their homes in Kosovo. Just one loonie per senior can help in

providing relief to those who have fled their homeland with little or no warning and few to no personal effects. At your next meeting, social, or recreational event, ask for donations and send to Canada's Seniors Care, CARE Canada, P.O. Box 9000, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 4X6.

Two commemorative mementos were made available: an IYOP Stamp can be purchased at your local postal outlet or by calling the National Philatelic Centre at 1-800-565-4362. An IYOP Sterling Silver Coin is available worldwide through the Canadian Mint's global network of dealers and distributors or by calling 1-800-267-1871.

IYOP promotional products were made available by Valiquette Enterprises, Ottawa by toll free fax order at 1-888-867-7852 or at the website: <http://iyop-aipa.ic.gc.ca>

IYOP Theme Song called Let's Live Every Minute is still available for purchase for \$10 (cd/cassette) at the Senior Citizens' Secretariat, 1740 Granville St., P.O. Box 2065, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2Z1.

Detailed information on these CCC projects is available on the IYOP website: <http://iyop-aipa.ic.gc.ca> or by calling toll free 1-800-355-4955 to the IYOP Secretariat in Ottawa.

Saskatchewan Advisory Committee Projects:

Saskatchewan supported and promoted the CCC projects mentioned above and invited people from around the province to participate in the following provincial projects:

A 20-community IYOP tour in January and February by the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism presented IYOP information and stimulated community-based IYOP event planning.

Grants of up to \$500 to fifty Saskatchewan communities were issued in March to assist in their IYOP community event. Grants were administered by the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism.

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism sponsored an IYOP conference and Annual General Meeting in Regina on May 18, 19 and 20. Theme of the conference was "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly", with guest speakers including Don Harron and Wes Ashwin. Theme was to reflect on what has been done for seniors in Saskatchewan and what needs to be done.

A tree planting program with TREEmendous Saskatchewan, Building a Lasting Legacy, which had the participation of ten communities planting hundreds of free tree seedlings. The project was intergenerational and environmental and occurred in May.

A traditional Pow Wow Honouring Our Elders May 26 at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Thousands of persons were in attendance at this memorable event including our guest, Co-Chair, Don Harron.

An IYOP ecumenical worship and potluck October 17 hosted by the Inner City Churches of Saskatoon at Knox United with a sermon given by Wes Ashwin, Chair of the Provincial Committee and presentation by the Honourable Flora MacDonald, Co-Chair of the CCC.

A Spotlight on Seniors education and trade show November 1 hosted by the Saskatoon Council on Aging at the Saskatoon Sheraton Cavalier.

An IYOP Provincial Awards Dinner November 15 at government House Co-Hosted by the Seniors Education Centre, University of Regina and the Provincial Advisory Committee, where seven older persons were honoured for their significant volunteer contributions in their retirement.

All communities, organizations, families and individuals were invited to plan their unique IYOP events during 1999, and were asked to acknowledge the contributions of older persons and to involve all generations in their celebrations!

- * attached to the original but not on this appendix was the IYOP product list and order form plus the IYOP theme song order information, words and musical score.**

